



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Group home care giver sentenced to jail for
assault of a vulnerable adult in April 2004

Washington, D.C. - United States Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein and District of Columbia Inspector General Charles J. Willoughby announced today that on November 16, 2005, Milton Poole, 46, of Temple Hills, Maryland, was sentenced in D.C. Superior Court before the Honorable Zinora Mitchell-Rankin to the maximum 180 days for assaulting a vulnerable adult in a group home where the defendant worked. The Court suspended 90 days of the sentence and permitted the defendant to serve the remaining 90 days with "work release privileges" upon verification of employment. The Court's sentence also included two years of supervised probation, a fine of \$500, and an order to stay away from the victim and the group home where the offense occurred.

In imposing the sentence, Judge Mitchell-Rankin stated that crimes against vulnerable citizens -- children, elders and persons with mental retardation and other cognitive deficits -- must be taken seriously, especially when a perpetrator occupies a position in which he is entrusted with the care and protection of a vulnerable person. She commented that government entities, the courts, and our communities are taking notice of these crimes and are not taking them lightly. She stated, "These crimes will not be tolerated."

Poole was found guilty of assault, following a bench trial before Judge Mitchell-Rankin on November 2, 2005. He was a care giver in a group home for mentally retarded adults in Northeast Washington, D.C. According to trial testimony, on April 21,

2004, Poole pushed one of the vulnerable adults in his care to the ground, slapping his face and “kneeing” him in the back to restrain him.

The OIG Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) investigated the assault. The MFCU, which was created in March 2000, handled this case as part of an effort called the Guardian Angel Project (GAP). GAP is a comprehensive program designed to deter, and when appropriate, punish health care providers who intentionally abuse or neglect vulnerable persons under their care. Among the institutions covered by GAP are nursing homes, group homes for adults who are mentally retarded and facilities for mentally ill persons.

In announcing the sentence, United States Attorney Wainstein and Inspector General Willoughby praised the work of Patient Abuse Coordinator Jonathan Rich of the MFCU, who investigated the case, and Susan Bieber Kennedy, Director of the MFCU, who conducted the sentencing hearing. Mr. Wainstein and Mr. Willoughby also commended the work of Assistant United States Attorney Sam Ramer and Dangkhua Nguyen of the MFCU, who jointly prosecuted the case, as well as paralegal specialist Lynda Randolph and legal assistant Janelle Taylor, who assisted in preparation of the case for trial.

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